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Audit Report: Superintendent Didn't Act In Taxpayers' Best Interest

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Auditor Investigates Duval Superintendent's Spending Habits In Previous District

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JACKSONVILLE, Fla. -- An investigation into Duval County Superintendent Dr. Joseph Wise's spending habits at his previous position allege that he did not act in the best interest of the taxpayers.

Wise came to Duval County from a Delaware school district. An auditor there asked for an investigation because he said Wise had mismanaged money.

The auditor's report on the investigation into Wise's state-issued credit card purchases stated:

- Wise exceeded the meal reimbursement thresholds 79 times during a period of just over two years.
- Wise did not maintain detailed itemized receipts for most of his meal purchases, and therefore it could not be determined if alcohol was purchased.
- A number of airfare transactions were for flight change fees and excess baggage fees.

It was also noted in the audit that Wise was not the only person who used the credit card but that purchases made by others were primarily related to travel and supplies.

When asked about the report, Wise released the following written statement:

"All records regarding SuperCard purchases were left in pristine condition when I departed in November 2005. No one has contacted me or provided data concerning the assertions in the most recent report. The auditor's assertions are puzzling because all transactions on any SuperCard used in the district were subject to prior local fund audits conducted each year by the State Auditor or his designees."

As a result of the findings, the Delaware auditor recommended stronger monitoring and enforcement procedures for future superintendents, but did not make any specific recommendations concerning Wise.

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